



merSETA

MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING AND RELATED SERVICES SETA

The merSETA: Press Release

Attention: Business Editors; Education and Training Editors; Labour Editors

R70m merSETA project aimed at closing the skills gap for qualified engineering artisans

For immediate Release,

The Manufacturing Engineering and Related Services Education Training Authority (merSETA) has commenced an Accelerated Artisan Training Programme (AATP) with its key levy paying organisations. Phase 1 of the project carries a budget of R70million. The steady decline of artisan training from the 1980s, and the concomitant demand for skilled artisans locally and internationally, has placed a binding constraint on the ability the merSETA's industrial sector to achieve the government's economic growth target of 6%. Accordingly, the merSETA has undertaken to support the JIPSA initiative by significantly increasing funding aimed at qualifying engineering artisans in a structured 80 week programme.

The programme is aimed at stimulating apprentice training beyond normal capacity or company specific requirements at large companies who were actively training artisans in the past. "There is an established resource and institutional capacity that needs to be leveraged to revitalize a healthy pipeline of artisan training" – says merSETA CEO, Dr. Raymond Patel. These companies are identified through their track record of successful apprentice training over the past four years and then invited to submit a declaration of how many extra apprentices they could train in the various trades according to

HEAD OFFICE

PO Box 61826
Marshalltown 2107
Phone 011 484-9310-16
Fax 011 484-9320
info@merseta.org.za

EASTERN CAPE

PO Box 34733; Newton
Park; Port Elizabeth; 6055
Phone 041 363 0117
Fax 041 363 0144
zngayeka@merseta.org.za

FREE STATE & NORTHERN CAPE

PO Box 6848
Bloemfontein 9300
Phone 051 430 1263
Fax 051 447 8873
gslabbert@merseta.org.za

GAUTENG & NORTH WEST

PO Box 62297
Marshalltown 2107
Phone 011 639 7800
Fax 011 639 7821
rchammudzi@merseta.org.

KWAZULU NATAL

PO Box 10279
Marine Parade 4056
Phone 031 208 4600-02
Fax 031 208 4624
mmtshali@merseta.org.za

MPUMALANGA & LIMPOPO

PO Box 13660
Leraatsfontein 1038
Phone 013 692 4616
Fax 013 692 4637
pmakaba@merseta.org.za

WESTERN CAPE

PO Box 2383
Bellville 7535
Phone 021 948 6606
Fax 021 948 6676
spretorius@merseta.org.za



the quality assurance standards of the merSETA. Once verified, the company joins the project team in order to share best practice and monitor the achievement of learning milestones on the part of the newly appointed apprentices.

Because the programme is accelerating the pace of theoretical learning and simulated competence, the selection criteria of candidate apprentices have been raised. Candidates must have completed at least four engineering subjects at N3 level, with one of the subjects relating directly to the trade being applied for, and with Maths and Science at a minimum of N2. Participating companies select their own candidates according to their assessment of the candidates' potential to complete the programme in the required time-frame.

The Metal Sector related trades are completed in 80 weeks by first focussing on the theoretical knowledge and simulated competence for the training schedules of the trade. This takes approximately 26 to 36 weeks, depending on the trade. The workplace experience is then completed according to a structured log book of activities to be signed off by a qualified artisan who also acts as coach and mentor – this takes place over a 54 week period which ends with a trade test.

The Motor Sector related trades are completed in a minimum of 80 to 104 weeks depending on the trade. Most of the scarce-skills trades in this sector are Competency Based Modular Training (CBMT) programmes which require certified competence after each level, with successfully assessed competence in the last level replacing the requirement for a trade test.

Progress on this project to date includes approval by the merSETA Governing Board on the funding and participation criteria for the project as well as sign-up of 16 merSETA levy paying companies on the programme from the Metal sector. The Motor sector will be invited to join the programme over the next two months in order for the merSETA to reach the Phase 1 target of 1300 apprentices.

“I am confident that this programme will sufficiently stimulate the apprentice intake and training delivery capacity of employers and training providers in our sector. It will create enough momentum to prepare a wider participation



platform for the Phase two funding window that commences in April of 2008”, concludes Dr. Patel.

Issued by: Helen Brown

8 Hillside Road, Parktown, 2193. PO Box 61826, Marshalltown, 2107

Tel: 011 484 9310 Fax: 086 670 0718, Cell 082 559 8676

E-mail: hbrown@merseta.org.za

Ends

